

Improving Student Outcomes: A Comprehensive Program for At-Risk Students

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Improving Student Outcomes: A Comprehensive Program for At-Risk Students

Heather Bradley, Ed.S
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The Task:

Implement a social and study skills program for at-risk 9th grade students that will:

1. Decrease behaviors
2. Improve academic success
3. Improve the likelihood of graduation in 4 years

The Data: Demographics

- 10 students
- 4 females, 6 males
- 5 White/Non-Hispanic, 5 African American
- All identified as being at-risk for not graduating based on historical grades, discipline referrals, and poor attendance
- 2 students had diagnosed medical conditions
- 2 were new to the school system

The Data: Identifying Factors

B Behavior

A Attendance

N Nurses Visits

G Grades

The Data: Behavior

(n) = 10

Qualitative data indicated a significant improvement in behavior when compared to the previous year. Parent, teacher, administrator, and student self-reports all showed a positive perception of student behavior when compared to the previous year.

Quantitative data; however, indicated otherwise: There was a 20% INCREASE in discipline referrals when compared to the previous year.

The Data: Behavior

Less Severe (Not As Significant)

- Tardies to class
- Tardies to school
- Dress Code
- Failure to return papers
- Not having your student ID
- Not having your agenda
- Not attending detention
- Minor disruptions in class
- Minor bus behaviors

More Severe (Significant)

- Fighting
- Cursing
- Major classroom disruptions
- Stealing
- Bullying
- Sexual Misconduct
- Aggression toward a teacher
- Major bus behaviors

The Data: Behavior

Middle School

47% of referrals are More Severe

53% of referrals are Less Severe

High School

34% of referrals are More Severe

66% of referrals are Less Severe

*For this population ONLY

The Data: Behavior

- Of those which were More Severe, 2 students accounted for 50% of the discipline referrals
- 36% increase in Less Severe discipline referrals between middle school and high school for this student population
- Overall there was a 17% DECREASE in More Severe discipline referrals
- The greatest decrease was seen in physical fights

The Data: Attendance

(n) = 9

- Little or No Effect
- Total Population = Increase of 6%
- Females = Increase of 7 % (one was out for 2 weeks with surgery)
- Males = Decrease of 1%
- African American = Decrease of 4%
- White/Non-Hispanic = Increase of 2%

The Data: Nurses Visits

(n) = 8

- In grades K-5 the ratio of nurses visits to discipline referrals is 4:1
- In grades 6-8 the ratio of nurses visits to discipline is 1:9
- The average number of nurses visits for this student population in grades K-5 was 26

If I were going to use 1 piece of rough data as a predictor for future discipline concerns to target early intervention it would be the number of nurses visits in the absence of a diagnosed medical condition.

The Data: Grades

- In 2013-14 the average was 2.5 credits failed
- In 2014-2015 the average was 1.2 credits failed

Credits Earned:

- Females = Increase of 18%
- Males = Increase of 11%
- African Americans = DECREASE of 13%
- White/Non-Hispanic = Increase of 17%

The Program: SSIC Student Identification

- PBIS Teams meet in April
- They look at BANG data
- They make recommendations as to who should participate for the following school term
- Class sizes work best if there are between 8-12 students
- Students are typically general education students who are at-risk for failure to graduate in 4 years

The Program: Staff Identification

- Classes should have 2 facilitators
- The preferred combination is a general education and a special education teacher
- Other combinations we have employed include:
 - School Psychologist/ SPED Teacher
 - SPED Teacher/Paraprofessional
 - Two SPED Teachers

The Program: Week 1

Day 1:

- Meet with students
- Explain the purpose of the group,
- Explain that group is OPTIONAL
- Provide parental permission to participate

Day 2:

- Take a Communication Survey
- Discuss Communication Styles
- Review how to identify and relate to different communication styles

The Program: Week 1

Day 3: Goal Setting Step 1

- Ask students: What was it that prevented you from being as successful as you possibly could have last year?

89% of students accurately identify inhibitors for success first semester.

This drops to 42% second semester.

The Program: Week 1

Day 3: Goal Setting Step 2

- For every inhibitor for success that the student's identify, help them to identify a replacement behavior.
- Once they have their list and the replacement behaviors, help them to identify target behaviors that they most want to improve.

Goal Setting Step 3

- Ask students: What are things that you enjoy, rewards or privileges that you would like to earn?

The Program: Week 1

Day 4 and 5: Individual Contracts

- Meet with students individually to:
 - Operationally define target goals
 - Set length of goal (1 week, 2 week, 4 week, 6 week, 9 week, semester)
 - Identify corresponding rewards for when target goals are met

Class Contract: Mxx Hxxxx

Behavior: When I feel an adult is disrespectful to me, I am disrespectful in return. When I complete my work I get out of my seat and will make noises by tapping things or disrupt other students by talking.

Replacement Skill: When I feel disrespected by an adult and I feel am going to be disrespectful back I can say, "Can I step outside for a minute." When I complete my work I can ask for something else to do, or color, or stand up near my desk if the teacher allows it.

Target Goal:

1. I will not get written up for being disrespectful to adults for the entire semester.
2. I will not be written up for engaging in distracting behaviors once I have completed my work for a period of 4 weeks.

Rewards:

1. When I go the entire semester without being written up for being disrespectful to adults, then I will get Subway for lunch one day.
2. When I go 4 weeks without a write up for distracting behaviors then I will get candy (jolly ranchers) or a homework pass (Mr. Bernard).

High School 101 Parental Permission of Participation

Dear Parent:

Your child has been given the opportunity to participate in a specialized instructional group during the High School 101 segment. During this segment we will work on the following skills:

Identifying Inhibitors for School Success

Identifying Strategies for Successful School Engagement

Identifying Stressors in the School Environment and How to Successfully Negotiate Them

Remediation and Support for Math Skills

Identifying Study Skills and Test Taking Strategies

Practicing Skills that Promote Successful Behavioral Growth in the High School Setting

Your child will receive credit for the High School 101 class while working on integral skills which will help them to be successful in the high school setting and beyond.

We hope that you will allow us to work with your child to help foster and promote these critical skills.

Thanks you so much,

Ms. Sandy Strickland, Instructional Lead Teacher

Ms. Heather Bradley, School Psychologist

_____ Yes, my child, _____ can participate in the small group High School 101 class.

_____ No, I do not wish for my child to participate in the small group High School 101 class.

Parent Signature _____

The Program: Week 2

Day 1-5:

- Contact parents of any student who has not yet returned a permission form
- Change schedules for any student whose parents have declined to allow them to participate
- Notify teachers and administrators as to which students are participating
- Study Skills Lessons:
 - Day 1: use of an Agenda
 - Day 2: organization of Notebooks
 - Day 3: note-taking methods and strategies
 - Day 4: use of power school to monitor grades, Career Interest Inventory, Transcript review
 - Day 5: Celebration, discuss upcoming SSIC classes, Set group rules, choose order of skills

The Program: Weeks 3-14 Tuesday/Thursday CICO

EVERY Tuesday and Thursday:

- Individually review student's grades, attendance, and discipline
- If there are missing assignments, have the student contact the teacher, and assist them with completing the missed work (if allowable) (modeling)
- If there are failed assignments, provide remediation
- If a student is consistently struggling in an area, co-ordinate tutorials with the student, parent, and teacher. Meet with the teacher to discuss any concerns they might have
- When a student misses a day of school or is tardy to school, contact the parent EVERY instance
- If a student has a discipline referral, conference with the student

The Program: Weeks 3-14 Monday, Wednesday

EVERY Monday and Wednesday

- Review group Guidelines (Rules)
- Introduce a skill
- Model a skill
- Have students discuss real examples in their lives when they have implemented the skill
- Have students role play their example
- Provide Feedback

The Program: Weeks 3-14 Friday

Every Friday:

- Review CICO folders (see attached)
- Identify rewards met
- Celebrations, shout outs, and rewards
- Preview the upcoming week

The Program: December

- No Groups
- Focus on preparing for exams, study groups, completion of work
- Exit Interviews
 - Review CICO data
 - If data supports dismissal, ask student if they wish to continue
- Set individual goals for the second semester
- Get information from the PBIS Team as to whether or not there are additional students who could benefit from participation

Key Elements that Are Critical for Success

- Administrative support
- Communication between facilitators, teachers, and administrators
- Materials
- Training
- Scheduling
- Participation is OPTIONAL not MANDATORY
- Parental input is sought

Delta's

- Training for General Education Teachers
- This year Social Skills Intervention Class is in grades 7-11, and our elementary schools. Next year we plan to add 6th grade as well as pre-school. How do we keep it varied for students who may be enrolled for multiple years?
- SSIC is a two-prong Tier 2, 3, or 4 intervention (CICO and Skills Streaming). How do we effectively communicate this to teachers and insure they collect the appropriate behavioral data, if necessary?
- Continuous staff training and support

Resources

Training

Dr. Sheldon Braaten email: sbraaten@behavioralinstitute.org

Website: <http://www.behavioralinstitute.org/>

Materials

- Skills Streaming: <http://www.skillstreaming.com/>
- Anger Replacement Training: <http://aggressionreplacementtraining.com/>
- Empathy Training: <https://www.researchpress.com/books/1218/empathy-and-social-competence-training>
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Contact Information

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